

NEWPORT AND GWENT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

A Brief History



1947 - 2017

The first season

On 16 October 1947 a meeting was held at 221 Caerleon Road Newport "by kind permission of Mr Meaker" to discuss the formation of a society for stamp collectors. The name of the society adopted by the 14 people present that evening was the Newport (Mon) Philatelic Society. A lower age limit for membership was set at 15 years with senior membership starting at 18. The first committee comprised a chairman (Mr Tyson), a secretary/ treasurer (Mr Clarke) and three committee members (Mrs Purnell, Mr Meaker and Mr Gordon).

<u>Meetings held 1947/48.</u>	
Oct 16	Inaugural meeting.
Oct 30	General meeting, followed by 'mint or used' debate.
Nov 13	General meeting, followed by "mint or used" debate.
Nov 27	"Three-minute night" by members.
Dec 11	"Papers and printing" - the Secretary.
Jan 8	Stamp quiz.
Jan 22	"Five favourite pages" night.
Feb 5	Debate - "Specialised or general collecting".
Feb 19	Stamp auction.
March 4	"Great Britain and its postal history" - MrChappell.
Mar 18	Exchange night.
Apr 1	"Iraq" - the Chairman.
Apr 15	Debate - "Foreign or Colonial". <i>Three-minute night.</i>
Apr 29	"Cyprus and its postal cancellations" - Mrs.Purnall.
May 13	Stamp quiz.
May 27	Display night.
Jun 10	Display by Mr.J.H.Ball, Longridge, Lancs, - mint Colonials.
Jun 24	Stamp auction.
Jul 8	<i>Debate - "Foreign or Colonial".</i>
Jul 22	<i>Stamps quiz.</i>

After a committee meeting on 27 October, a general meeting on the 30th agreed to a subscription of 5/- for senior and 2/6 for junior members.

Following negotiations with the Newport Education Committee, a room at the Adult Education Centre in Stow Hill was secured at a rent of 2/6 an evening. The first meeting at this venue was on 13 November, when the age limit

for membership of the society was lowered to 12 years with proviso that a prospective member aged between 12 and 15 be sponsored by a full member. The society's first philatelic topic rounded off the evening, a debate on "mint or used", with the secretary speaking in favour of mint and Mrs Purnell for used stamps. The debate ended with the "used" side victors by eight votes to three. A quote from the record of that meeting is interesting:

"The first speaker stressed the financial aspect (of mint stamps) as regards both the collector himself and the country of issue and the question of condition and general appearance, and the second speaker took the line of purpose of the postage stamp and the romance of postmarks. A lively debate resulted, emergent points including the sharp practices in many countries postmarking to order."

By 18 December the society had only £1 in hand and the first debate on attracting new members started.

The first season included a variety of debates, lectures and discussions, the emphasis being different from today when most evenings centre around displays of album leaves. There were also two quiz evenings and two auctions. The first visiting speaker was invited on 10 June 1948: Mr Ball of Longridge Lancashire was "persuade to shew some of his fine collection of British Colonials" during a trip to the town.

The next ten years

There is a gap in the records for the 1948/49 season but at the AGM at the start of the 1949/50 season, Mr Clarke stood down as secretary due to pressure of work in favour of Mr Crowther. Mr Clarke remained on the committee being joined by May Pegler and Mr Kerr. By December 1950, Mr Crowther was also suffering from pressure of work and resigned as secretary. Ron Myer took over his duties from 1 January 1951.

On 17 May 1951 the society staged its first exhibition:

"Stamps on show at Newport

For the first time since they were formed three-and-a-half years ago Newport Philatelic Society displayed their members' collections in the library of St Julian's High School for Boys on Thursday. If this trial exhibition is counted a success the twenty members will again be laying out their collections on tables and on the bookcase doors. There were about 2,500 stamps on show. Seventeen-year-old J A Evans of Trevithin Vicarage, Pontypool who started collecting when he was seven had on show a sheet of 240 Victoria penny reds. It took him a year to collect them

- Argos May 18th 1951"

The "Stamp Mirror" on 2 June noted "that four prospective new members were enrolled on the strength of this action".

The society was then invited to provide a display at the Festival Exhibition in Pontypool which was to be opened by the Chairman of the Council on 9 July.

Another novel feature of the 1950/51 season was the purchase of a collection by the society for the sum of £4-12-0. The next AGM reported that "a few shillings had been lost on the purchase... owing to the bad description of same in catalogue". At the same AGM, a members' dinner and affiliation to the British Philatelic Association were discussed but both failed to find favour.

A failure to attract new members during the next couple of years was attributed to the uncomfortable accommodation and the choice of Thursdays for meetings. A move to the Castle Restaurant at the end of 1954 was accompanied by a change to Wednesday evenings. The 1954/55 season saw more firsts with a visit to and a return visit from (the now defunct) Pontypool Philatelic Society and the setting up of an exchange packet.

Len Ewings joined in 1955 and meetings moved to the comfortable and quiet surroundings of his home.

February 8th 1958 saw the opening of an "Exhibition of postage stamps by the Newport Philatelic society at the Museum and Art Gallery, Dock Street". The exhibition made the news in an unfortunate fashion with the headline "Newport mystery of vanished stamps".

"Who is the stamp collector responsible for the removal of stamps from an exhibition arranged by Newport Philatelic Society in the town's museum and art gallery? Six stamps are believed to have been taken, none of any great value. The polythene sheets covering the stamp frames have been cut just enough to enable a stamp to be removed. Several of the stamps belong to Mr Leonard Ewings of Clarence Place Newport. 'We believe that children are the culprits. Possibly they were attracted by the pictures on the stamps' he said. 'It's rather annoying'. He added ' We are very pleased however at the away the exhibition has been received since it opened. A thousand people have already visited it."

- Argus, February 1958

By the time it closed on 22 February, 2,222 people had seen the display of 400 album sheets.

OVER 2,000 VISIT NEWPORT (MON.) EXHIBITION

During the fortnight's display by the Newport (Mon.) P.S. at the local Museum and Art Gallery, at least 2,250 adults visited the Exhibition. This figure exceeded the expectations of both the Society and the Curator. Several new members have been enrolled as a result. This was the society's first exhibition.

VISIT THE EXHIBITION OF POSTAGE STAMPS

by THE NEWPORT PHILATELIC
SOCIETY

AT THE
MUSEUM AND ART-
GALLERY

DOCK ST. NEWPORT

FEBRUARY 8th to 22nd

OPEN 10am to 5-30pm

ADMISSION FREE

The event was also reported on page 63 of volume 90/2 (21 March 1958) of Stamp Collecting Weekly.

Coming of age

The first chairman, Mr Tyson, had to offer his resignation when his work took him from the town in 1958. Mr Harding, who had been his deputy, replaced him. At the beginning of the following season Mr Harding declared his wish not to continue and Len Ewings stepped in. Mt Tyson became the society's first honorary life member at the AGM in 1958 in recognition of his services to the society. For the first ten years the AGM was held at the start of the season and it was only in 1959 that members voted to move it to the end so that the programme could be worked out in advance of the new season.

Despite the success of the exhibition it was difficult to attract and keep new members, with attendance being as low as three or four at some meetings. Pontypool Philatelic society disbanded in 1960. Philately in the area was in the doldrums. In 1963, it was decided that adverts in the Argus should refer to Newport Stamp club, as "Philatelic society" was perhaps too highbrow. No new members were forthcoming from this approach and membership stayed below twenty during the early 1960's.

A competition night was introduced on 20 April 1966. It was for the Chairman's cup and comprised a display of up to three sheets a member on the subject of wild animals, the winner of the trophy (a rose bowl) being Mr S James. Because of its success a second competitive night was held the following year with the subject being "flowers". Ron Myer won this time with his display of medicinal flowers.

The 1966/67 season saw membership almost double, from 13 to 24, due to the expanding interest in Great Britain commemoratives as the Post Office increased the number of special issues. The Burgeoning membership forced a move from the Ewings' residence to the W R Lysaght Institute in 1967.

The society entered its 21st year with two dozen enthusiastic members. The new art gallery in John Frost Square proved to be an excellent venue for an anniversary exhibition from 10 to 24 May 1969. Members made special glass-fronted frames for the exhibition. Stamp collecting was booming as the Argus of 12 May stated:

"Stampede for stamps

Records crowds attended the stamp exhibition which opened at Newport art gallery on Saturday. The exhibition, organised by the Newport Philatelic Society and the GPO, shows thousands of stamps from all over the world. A gallery spokesman said: 'It is quite fantastic. We never expected it to be so popular. After two hours 130

1d. Black on show

THE world's first postage stamp — the Penny Black of 1840 — will be on show in Newport for the next two weeks with many other rare stamps.

They will be part of an exhibition arranged for the 21st anniversary of Newport Philatelic Society, which is being held in the town's new art gallery.

Altogether, 6,000 stamps and covers will be on display, including the Cape Triangular, the first three-sided stamp, issued in 1860. Admission is free.

people had been in. On a fine Saturday there would normally be about 200 visitors throughout the day."

The final attendance was 2,800!

The first Newport Convention

To add to the success in 1969, the Federation of South Wales Philatelic societies was formed at the end of the year. Newport was a founder member. The Federation held its first convention in Swansea in 1970. Fostered by individuals within the Newport society, a special relationship had been established with the Cardiff society during the 1960s. The Federation made it easier for the society to forge closer links with the other stamps clubs in the area.

A further change in venue occurred during the 1970/71 season. This time to the Hong Kong restaurant in Griffin Street, thanks to Mr Wong. During the season May Pegler dies and bequeathed her collection of some 20 albums to the society. As a tribute the society set up three exhibition frames each of nine sheets as a permanent record of her contribution and introduced a new thematic competition for the "May Pegler Memorial Trophy". Entries for the competition comprised from three to six sheets. Ken Willmott was the first winner on 26 April 1972 with his "EXPO 67" exhibit.

The highlight of the 1971/72 season was the invitation to the Federation to give a display to the Royal Philatelic Society London at 41 Devonshire Place on 4 November 1971. Newport contributed five of the 52 frames.

The first end of season dinner was held at the Hong Kong restaurant on 17 May 1972 with a charge of £1 a head. With the sale by Mr Wong of his restaurant later in the year a new venue had to be found for meetings for the 1972/73 season. The society was fortunate in being provided a room free of charge in the Moss Building by the Post Office. The second annual dinner was then held at the Wentwood Inn with Mr Davies, the Newport Postmaster, and his wife being invited as guests.

At the AGM on 8 May 1974 the society changed its name to the Newport and Gwent Philatelic Society to concord with the newly introduced county name.

The 7th Federation convention, STAMPIAU 76, dominated the 1975/76 season. It was Newport's first. Held at St Julian's comprehensive School on 10 April, it was officially opened by Newport former Head Postmaster R H D Carter. RAC signs paid for by the society ensured that stamp collectors flocking from all over the country could find their way safely to the exhibition. The Nantes Philatelic Society, who flew over to Rhosneigr from France especially for the event, provided some of the most interesting displays. A special cover for the show commemorated a rugby match between Newport and Cambridge in 1902. More than 550 covers were sold. A private treaty sale, an auction and dealers' stands all contributed to a small profit on a highly successful day.

The Second Newport convention

At the AGM following the first convention, in May 1976, Len Ewings said he wished to retire after some twenty years as chairman. Fred Brace was voted in to succeed him. Two years later, on 3 May 1978, a new position of president was created and filled by popular acclaim by Len Ewings.

Herr Walter Spiller, chairman of the Heidenheim district Philatelic Association, was among a party of representatives from Heidenheim who visited Newport in June 1979 prior to the twinning of the two towns. Ron and Elsie Myer were invited to the Mansion House to meet the German party and Fred and Jessie Brace invited Herr Spiller to Sunday lunch at which he was presented with an inscribed souvenir plaque from the society. Saturday 24 April 1982 was the date of the 13th Federation convention. Newport was the host for the second time and, as in 1976, the venue was St Julian's Comprehensive School. On 15 September 1981 the society was saddened by the sudden death of the chairman, Fred Brace. Fred Scott stepped in for the rest of the season, which included the organisation of the convention.

As previously, a special convention cover was produced (350 being printed). Not only was the convention a resounding financial success, turning in a profit of £191, but the organisation was immaculate and the society received several letters of thanks. One of the lasting impressions among those attending was apparently the quality of the refreshments.

Towards 50 years

Having filled the breach so admirably, Fred Scott asked to be relieved at the end of the 1981/82 season and was succeeded by John Gunn at the AGM. This meeting also saw the start of the society's library, its first acquisition being "The Stanley Gibbons Book of Stamps", a gift from MR and Mrs Bayliss who were dealers at the Convention.

Ron Myer became the sixth honorary life member of the club at the AGM in April 1983, in recognition of his services as secretary over the years. The society was once again saddened by the loss of a member with the sudden death of the president, Len Ewings. It was agreed as a mark of respect to leave vacant for the time being the post of president.

The long association with the Post Office ended with the final meeting of the 1986/87 season. The Moss Building was no longer available. After several inquiries, rooms were secured for the next season, the society's 40th, at the Newport Civic Centre. At the end of 1987, the society's longest serving officer, Ron Myer, stood down as secretary due to ill health. Ron, sadly passed away during 1988.

The new secretary, John Perry, introduced a twice-yearly newsletter for club members, with the first issue being in April 1989. The club also became more outward looking with the regular exchange visit with Cardiff being supplemented by Nailsea (Bristol), Hereford, Bridgend and (In 1996) Barry. The tradition of the (almost) annual dinner continued with various venues being tried (Tredegar House, Tredegar Park golf Club, Golden Lion at Magor, Rising Sun at Rogerstone). In addition, the club joined the Federation exchange box circuit, a facility that has allowed many members to sell surplus stamps and to buy new items, often at bargain prices.



Post Office stand at 1991 Convention

The most important event of 1991 was the third Newport Convention, at St Julians School on 20 April. The weather was kind and over two hundred attended. It was difficult to count because there were not enough programmes. The mayor of Newport, Harry Jones, opened the convention and presented the prizes. The convention cover included two unusual postmarks from Caldicot and the South Wales postal historians soon snapped up serviced cards. There were also 15 dealers and a Post Office Sales counter, together with competitive and other displays. The club made a donation to Federation funds from the surplus from the day.

Another long-standing member, Ivor Bennett, passed away in 1993. The society joined the Association of British Philatelic Societies, when it was founded in 1994.

The twinning link between the Society and Heidenheim had been dormant for many years until in 1995, Dierk Lisdorf, the vice-president of the German club came to Newport as part of the official twinning party. The visit coincided with the Federation Autumn Day in Barry at the end of September. This gave Dierk a chance to sample a Welsh stamp fair. The visit also included an evening at Cardiff Castle and a reception at the Mayor's parlour in Newport.



*Anne & John Perry (left) and Dierk Lisdorf (right)
with Mayor*

John Perry, as secretary, joined the Newport twinning party for its visit to Heidenheim in May 1996 and the links between the two clubs were firmly established. Gwen Hussey and Dennis Martin visited Heidenheim as part of their October celebrations, which included an official dinner and a stamp fair. The society provided four displays for the fair: Paintings on Stamps (Gwen Hussey), Gibraltar (Dennis Martin), Newport Postmarks (Martyn Britton) and British Locals (Roy Bentley). A special friendship cover with Heidenheim and Caldicot (Newport, Gwent) postmarks was produced.

Fifty already

The 28th annual convention of the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies was held on 3 May 1997. For this occasion, a special postcard was produced showing postmarks of Newport. The club also provided a special display for the convention, which was held in Port Talbot.

The 50th year started with Newport's first Autumn Day stamp fair, on 4 October 1997. This is a special occasion for club members. The world is getting smaller and exchanges which first developed with Cardiff, and then with the rest of South Wales and the South West of England, have now expanded to Europe. For the Autumn Day, we had the pleasure of welcoming guests from Germany (Dierk Lisdorf, Roger Leintz, Gerd and Gudrun Duda) and Belgium (Brigitte Leysen). As well as the Autumn Day, the club arranged a special meeting on the Monday, preceded by a meeting with the deputy mayor.

Throughout 1998 the club continued to thrive with membership around the 25 mark. The next two years took us up to the millennium with a strong membership, a varied programme and a seemingly permanent home at the Civic Centre in Newport.

In 1999, the society established a web page: and has built up links around the world. Since then the society has built up its exchange links with links with other clubs and in 2001 added its first visit to the Thornbury society.

Strengthening links with Heidenheim

In 2002, the club decided to formalise its links with Heidenheim through joining the Newport Heidenheim Twinning Association.

Over the weekend of 10 to 13 October 2003, the Heidenheim stamp club (Briefmarkenfreunde Heidenheim e.V.) celebrated its 90th anniversary. John Perry and Gwen Hussey from the Newport and Gwent Philatelic Society set off on 10 October to join members of other partnership towns in celebrating the 90th anniversary. A short flight from Heathrow to Stuttgart was followed by a train journey to Heidenheim via Bad Cannstadt and Aalen. On arrival at 18:30, we were whisked off to the apartment of the secretary of the Heidenheim club, Dierk Lisdorf before joining the others in the Gaststätte "Hirsch" for a typical German meal. As well as Heidenheim, there were representatives from, Clichy (Paris), St Gilles (Brussels), St Pölten (Austria), Döbeln (Saxony), Jihlava (Czech republic) and Sisak (Croatia). Each club made a short speech.

After dinner, the visitors dispersed to the houses of Heidenheim club members, with whom they would spend the weekend. We stayed with Gerd and Gudrun Duda at their house in Steinheim, about 10 km from Heidenheim. Gerd and Gudrun had previously visited Newport. An early start was needed on Saturday for the partnership congress at the Rathaus in Heidenheim. The congress took a review of the activities of each club and the planned activities for the coming year. Translation between German, French and English helped the joint understanding. Items discussed were the exchange of old stamp catalogues, ways to develop youth philately and future partnership plans.

The clubs vary considerably in size. St Gilles has 400 members, St Pölten has 270, Döbeln and Newport have 25, Jihlava has 170 and Sisak has 40. The year 2005 will be special for St Pölten as it will celebrate 35 years of partnership with Heidenheim among other anniversaries. The club will run a national stamp exhibition. The next partnership meeting will be in Clichy at the end of June or beginning of July 2004.

After the congress, a short train journey to Itzelberg for lunch was followed by an afternoon at the Georg Elser museum in Königsbrunn. Elser had attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler on 8 November 1939. The event was not commemorated for many years after the War but eventually a museum was opened. A copy of the exhibition in the museum was currently also touring Germany.

After taking the train back to Heidenheim, visitors returned with their hosts to prepare for the celebration dinner, which started at 19:00 in the Paulus Church meeting house. The 25 guests were joined by 80 members and family from the Heidenheim club. The evening commenced with the Heidenheim-Snattheim wind band, one of whose members, on flute, was Isobel the partner of Dierk Lisdorf. The Mayor of Heidenheim, Bernhard Ilg made an address to the meeting. During the evening members of Clichy, St Gilles, St Pölten, Döbeln and Newport clubs made presentations to Helmuth Feichtenbeiner, chairman of the Heidenheim club. The gift from Newport was a framed picture of the Mansion House by John Parry, a local Newport artist. The evening ended with a display of square dancing from a local dance group and a barrel organ routine from Gerd Duda.

Another early start was needed on Sunday for the stamp fair and auction at the Rathaus. For the occasion, a

special cancellation was available for franking items at the fair. There was also an auction, with many bargains of Germany stamps to be had and a display of stamp frames of 15 sheets from each of the partnership clubs. The Newport displays were: Scenes from the Leipzig Fairs (Gwen Hussey); Monmouthshire Postal History to 1840 (John Perry); and The Post Office on the MS Kungsholm (John Perry). The Heidenheim club presented certificates for each display, on each of which was a copy of the Georg Elser stamp that had been issued on 16 January 2003, the centenary of his birth. Each stamp had the exhibition cancellation. Specially printed envelopes and postal stationery were also available for sale.

On the Saturday and Sunday, we met Renate and Eric Klement-Schmidberger from the Heidenheim twinning association. Renate provided an excellent translation of the talk by the curator of the Georg Elser museum. On the Sunday, we talked also about Rudolf Themen, a local painter, whose art had been displayed recently in the Rathaus. There is the possibility that this exhibition will come to Newport.

At the end of the day, we met at a Chinese restaurant before a final night's rest in Heidenheim and returning to our own towns having made many new friendships and renewed others.

The 2004 Autumn Day

Newport continues to support the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies and maintains its membership of the Association of British Philatelic Societies. In 2004, the club hosted the Autumn Day of the South Wales Federation for the first time since the club's golden jubilee in 1997. The stamp fair was held at Maes Ebbw School in Newport on 9 October 2004. Five local dealers and seven clubs from the federation had tables and all reported brisk business in the morning.

The 2004/05 and 2005/6 seasons saw the club thriving in its Newport Civic Centre rooms and preparing for the 60th anniversary of the first meeting of the society.



2004 Fair - Gwen Hussey (Newport) front right

The 2007 Autumn Day

The club was host for the Autumn Day for the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies on 29 September 2007. As in 2004, the Maes Ebbw School was chosen as the venue. Because 2007/8 was the 60th anniversary of the



Colin Lewis & Neil Prior from South Wales Federation



the first meeting, a special Smiler sheet and postcard were produced for postmarking on the actual day of the first meeting, 16 October. The postcard was also available at the Autumn Day.

After Autumn Day 2007

The first visiting speaker for the 60th season was Jim Crompton, who gave a talk on the New Hebrides on 3 October 2007.

The club has continued to flourish and still meets at the Civic Centre in Newport. It supports the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies, with John Perry, secretary of the Newport club, being chairman of the Federation from October 2008. Although the club has gained many medals and been winners in the various Federation classes over the years, the 2008 Convention saw its first gold medals, gaining two on the day, with Stuart Geddes being judged "best in show".



The year 2010 was a special one for stamp collectors with the London 2010 international stamp exhibition celebrating the 170th anniversary of the Penny Black. The Federation Convention was one of the associated regional events. Here John Perry (fourth from left) is shown with John Baron, chairman of the ABPS, Neil Prior Secretary of the Federation and Harry Bebell deputy mayor of Neath Port Talbot with his wife Paula. Newport member Bev Davies, who is heavily involved in the National Stamp Active network provided the "Kid's Corner" at the Convention. Neil Jones gained a gold medal in the Federation Competition and his entry was also judged "best in Show". In 2011, Newport gained first prizes in two classes and topped this in 2012 with best in show, once again by Neil Jones and two other firsts including one in the junior class. The Convention saw club members gaining firsts in 2013 (general class) and 2014 (thematic class).



In October 2013, the club lost one of its long-standing members, Gwen Hussey, who had joined in 1980. Gwen had been chairman and the club librarian. She was also an accredited judge. On a more positive note, the club hosted the South Wales Federation Autumn Fair on 20 September 2014 at the Graig Community Centre in Bassaleg. With seven dealers and eight club tables, the hall was full and buzzing. As usual, the club excelled with its refreshments.



Bernie Riff passed away on 11 November 2014. He had been a member since 1989 but illness had prevented him from attending meetings in the past two years. Bernie had collected a wide range of material, including Strasbourg, Leipzig and Art Cover material which he had displayed to club members. The following day the club held a dinner in honour of Gwen Hussey who had passed away a year previously.

At its AGM at the end of October 2014 the AGM of the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies had elected John Perry as its chairman and Graham Bean from both Cardiff and Newport clubs vice-chairman. Success then followed at the Federation Convention on 23 May 2015, when, as chairman, John Perry was also awarded a gold medal and "best in show" for his postal history entry of Finland and Les Ashton-Smith took the thematics prize.

Towards the 70th Anniversary

The club continued to have success at the Federation Convention with Erene Grieve gaining the thematics trophy with her entry in 2016 on "The Written Word". Nationally John Perry gained one of the four ABPS Awards of Merit in 2016.



We were saddened by the sudden death in July 2015 of Harry Workman, a stalwart of the club for many years. Dennis Martin, who had joined the society in 1966 and was the longest serving member, passed away at the end of August 2016. The society has given Honorary life membership to Alistair MacKinnon, who stood down as Chairman at the 2016 AGM. Plans for the 70th anniversary of the society in 2017 include hosting the South Wales Federation Autumn Day on 23 September 2017 an anniversary meal and a special "Smilers" sheet. Meanwhile, another of our former members, Peter Coldrey, passed away. Also at the club AGM, John Perry announced that he was stepping down as club secretary, with the task being handed over to Bev Davies.

From 27 to 30 July 2017, the ABPS organised its annual Congress weekend in Cardiff. For this, it enlisted the help of our Newport and of the Cardiff club with John Perry being one of the two joint chairman. Congress had the theme of "Aspects of Wales", to which three members, Martyn Britton, Roy Bentley and John Perry created a presentation on the postal history of Monmouthshire. Erene Grieve gave a presentation on the history of writing materials and on the "stamps in Schools" project that she leads. This also gave the opportunity for Bev Davies to display the excellent "Only One World" Stampex competition group entry from our Dell (Chepstow) school club. In addition, John Perry gave two short presentations, on Bela Sekula and on Finland during the second world war. The Sunday morning was the free local societies session to which Les Ashton-Smith, Alistair MacKinnon and Neil Jones contributed. This was really a joint club effort with ten members attending. The photograph below was taken on the Sunday when nine of our members were able to attend,

The next major event was the South Wales Federation Autumn Fair, which took place on 23 September 2017 at the same venue as the 2014 fair. Once again this was a great success with 125 visitors, in part due to an illustrated article in the South Wales Argus the previous week. As well as the support from three other clubs from the Federation (Bridgend, Cardiff, and Carmarthen), there were several dealers, all of who were very happy with the day, as illustrated by the photograph of Roy Hollis (Cover Love) and his helper John.



The Argus published another article a couple of days after the fair. The club produced a postcard showing the Civic Centre in Newport that was first available on the day together with an overprint on the remaining stock of the postcard from the 1997 Federation Convention.

The final major event leading up to the 70th anniversary was the club dinner held at the Parc Golf Club in Newport on 4 October 2017, at which each member present received a copy of the postcard and miniature sheet commemorating the 70th anniversary of the club. The retiring secretary, John Perry, received a barometer as thanks for his thirty years of service. Twenty seven members and guests joined together in toasting the health of the club.

The club continued to thrive, with 31 members at the start of the 2017/18 season.



Roy Bentley (left) & John Perry



The seventeen members present at the dinner